

REMARKS

The Office Action mailed May 3, 2007 has been carefully reviewed and the foregoing amendment has been made in consequence thereof.

Claims 6-20 are now pending in this application. Claims 6-20 stand rejected. Claims 1-5 have been canceled.

The Office Action recites on page 2 that the “indicated allowability of claims 6-20 is withdrawn in view of the newly discovered reference(s) to Anderson (U.S. 1,603,307). Rejections based on the newly cited reference(s) follow.” Applicants note that the Office Action does not apply Anderson as the basis for rejecting Claims 6-20 but rather applies Wagner (U.S. 5,230,183). Accordingly, Applicants assume that the Office Action intended to apply Wagner rather than Anderson, with respect to the rejection of Claims 6-20.

The rejection of Claims 6-12 and 14-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,230,183 to Wagner (hereinafter referred to as “Wagner”) is respectfully traversed.

Wagner describes a cylinder head resurfacing device that includes a pair of first and second carrier members (80 and 82) that are each slidably coupled to a frame (60). The first carrier member (80) is positioned opposite the second carrier member (82). The frame (60) includes a pair of longitudinal parallel rails (62). The first and second carrier members (80 and 82) are slidably coupled to the rails (62). Moreover, each carrier member (80) and (82) includes a clamp assembly (12) coupled thereto. Each clamp assembly (120) includes a plurality of clamp pins (122) that extend longitudinally outward from the clamp assembly (120). A screw (90) extends generally longitudinally between the rails (62) and is coupled to each carrier member (80 and 82). Rotation of the screw (90) moves the carrier members (80 and 82) towards or away from each other. Notably, Wagner does not describe nor suggest a stationary locator block that includes at least one groove that is sized to receive a locator pin therein, wherein the stationary locator block is fixedly coupled to an upper surface of a platform.

Claim 6 recites an apparatus for aligning a gas turbine engine blade including an airfoil and a dovetail, wherein the apparatus comprises “a stationary locator block supporting said locator pin, said locator block comprising at least one groove sized to receive said locator pin therein . . . a base member comprising a platform comprising an end plate, a bottom surface, and an opposite upper surface for supporting said slide block assembly and said locator block, said slide block assembly is slidably coupled to said platform upper surface, said locator block fixedly coupled to said platform upper surface....”

Wagner does not describe nor suggest an apparatus for aligning a gas turbine engine blade including an airfoil and a dovetail, as is recited in Claim 6. Specifically, Wagner does not describe nor suggest an apparatus including a stationary locator block that includes at least one groove that is sized to receive a locator pin therein, wherein the stationary locator block is fixedly coupled to an upper surface of a platform. Rather, in contrast to the present invention, Wagner describes a clamping device that includes two opposing carrier members that are each slidably coupled to a base and that are each configured to move towards or away from each other. Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully submit Claim 6 to be patentable over Wagner.

Claims 7-12 and 14-16 depend from independent Claim 6. When the recitations of Claims 7-12 and 14-16 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 6, Applicants respectfully submit that dependent Claims 7-12 and 14-16 likewise are patentable over Wagner.

Claim 17 recites a tool for securing a turbine blade including an airfoil and a dovetail, wherein the tool comprises “a stationary locator block supporting said locator pins, said locator block comprising a plurality of grooves to receive each said locator pin therein . . . a base member comprising a platform comprising an end plate, a bottom surface, and an opposite upper surface for supporting said slide block assembly and said locator block, said slide block assembly is slidably coupled to said platform upper surface, said locator block fixedly coupled to said platform upper surface....”

Wagner does not describe nor suggest a tool for securing a turbine blade including an airfoil and a dovetail, as is recited in Claim 17. Specifically, Wagner does not describe nor suggest an apparatus including a stationary locator block that includes a plurality of grooves that receive each locator pin therein, wherein the stationary locator block is fixedly coupled to an upper surface of a platform. Rather, in contrast to the present invention, Wagner describes a clamping device that includes two opposing carrier members that are each slidably coupled to a base and that are each configured to move towards or away from each other. Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully submit Claim 17 to be patentable over Wagner.

Claims 18-20 depend from independent Claim 17. When the recitations of Claims 18-20 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 17, Applicants respectfully submit that dependent Claims 18-20 likewise are patentable over Wagner.

For the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the Section 102 rejection of Claims 6-12 and 14-20 be withdrawn.

The rejection of Claim 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wagner in view of U.S. Patent No. 2,907,233 to Broffitt (hereinafter referred to as “Broffitt”) is respectfully traversed.

Wagner is described above.

Broffitt describes a checking and drilling machine that includes a blade holder (56) that supports a turbine blade (54) at a blade root (58). The blade holder (56) includes an air cylinder (84) that pushes a shaft (86) upwards when actuated, such that the shaft (86) engages the bottom of the blade root (58). As a result, the blade is positioned against blade positioning points (78), (80), and (82). The blade holder (56) also includes an initial blade positioning mechanism (94) that supports and clamps the blade root (58). Notably, Broffitt does not describe nor suggest a stationary locator block that includes at least one groove sized to receive a locator pin therein, wherein the stationary locator block is fixedly coupled to an upper surface of a platform.

Claim 13 depends from Claim 6, which recites an apparatus for aligning a gas turbine engine blade including an airfoil and a dovetail, wherein the apparatus comprises “a stationary locator block supporting said locator pin, said locator block comprising at least one groove sized to receive said locator pin therein . . . a base member comprising a platform comprising an end plate, a bottom surface, and an opposite upper surface for supporting said slide block assembly and said locator block, said slide block assembly is slidably coupled to said platform upper surface, said locator block fixedly coupled to said platform upper surface....”

Neither Wagner nor Broffitt, considered alone or in combination, describes or suggests an apparatus for aligning a gas turbine engine blade including an airfoil and a dovetail, as is recited in Claim 6. More specifically, neither Wagner nor Broffitt, considered alone or in combination, describes or suggests an apparatus including a stationary locator block that includes at least one groove that is sized to receive a locator pin therein, wherein the stationary locator block is fixedly coupled to an upper surface of a platform. Rather, in contrast to the present invention, Wagner describes a clamping device that includes two opposing carrier members that are each slidably coupled to a base and that are each configured to move towards or away from each other, and Broffitt merely describes a checking and drilling machine that includes an air cylinder that pushes a shaft such that the shaft engages the bottom of a blade root to position the blade against a plurality of positioning points.

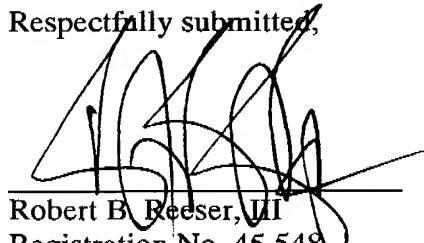
Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Claim 6 is submitted to be patentable over Wagner in view of Broffitt.

Claim 13 depends indirectly from independent Claim 6. When the recitations of Claim 13 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 6, Applicants submit that dependent Claim 13 likewise is patentable over Wagner in view of Broffitt.

For at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the Section 103 rejection of Claim 13 be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing amendment and remarks, all the claims now active in this application are believed to be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and favorable action is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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